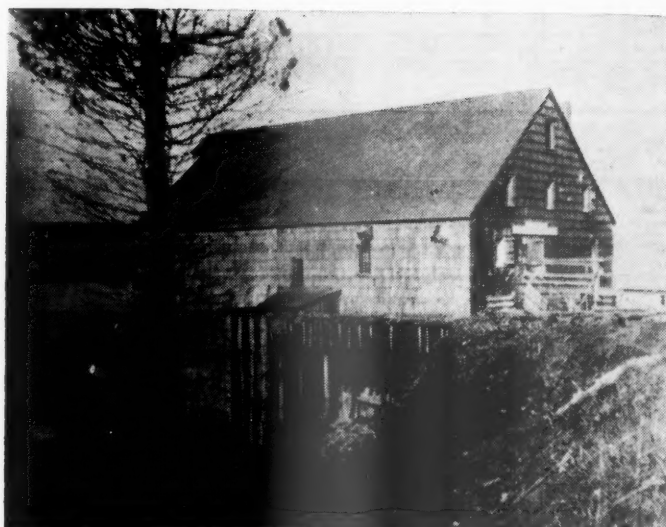


LONG ISLAND FORUM



This Cold Spring Harbor Mill Stood From 1791 to 1921

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LONG ISLAND
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FOR LONG ISLANDERS EVERYWHERE

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Contributing Editors

John C. Huden, Ph.D.

Robert R. Coles

Julian Denton Smith, Nature

AS TO OLD MILLS

In 1875 New York State had 7500
mills of various types, and of that
number, Long Island had its share.
Huntington Township boasted several
of those real substantial
structures which added to the com-
fort and way of life which prevailed
at that time. The list of Hunt-
ington's mills, which may not be
generally known, includes several
which were built on the Nachague-
tack River.

In 1680 a grant was given to
John Robinson to build and oper-
ate a mill on the Cold Spring River.
But we find that two years later
the privilege was transferred to
John Adams. Evidently Mr. Rob-
bins did not perform and thus lost
his rights thereto.

In 1691 Jonathan Rogers built a
mill on the same stream when he
was granted several parcels of land
by the Town, and also the "stones
and irons from the old mill". This
was built as a saw and grist mill
but was later used as a woolen
mill, and still later as a cotton
mill. Some of the timbers are
still to be seen on the original site
and to view them and stand on the
spot which gave birth to mech-
anized industry in that once thriv-
ing village evokes a deep feeling
of nostalgia.

In 1782 the town fathers granted
the right to Richard Conkling to
build New York State's second
paper mill, in Cold Spring Harbor.
Some of its paper was shipped to
England where it was used for
printing the Bible. The road in
front of the Cold Spring Harbor
library was known as Paper Mill-
dam Road.

Another Cold Spring Harbor mill
was built about 1791, a half mile
farther downstream from the Rog-
ers mill. But as this latter mill
was on the shore of the bay, a
unique arrangement was used to
convey fresh water to it. A 1000-
foot canal, still very much in evi-
dence, was dug along the shore of

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A Successful Treasure Hunt

ONE of the best authenticated and interesting legends or tales of buried treasure on Fire Island sets the date of the event in the year 1830. No less than fifteen or twenty people witnessed the various stages leading from the first appearance of the treasure hunters, to the final successful conclusion of their expedition. The description of the men who comprised the party, and particularly that of the odd-looking leader of the group, is so close and in such unusual agreement, that there is little doubt but that the tale is more fact than fancy. It is further borne out by two letters and the pages of an old country physician's diary.

Among the interesting, in fact the intriguing chain of events, is the methodical, clean-cut and rapid manner in which the treasure was located and uncovered, clearly indicating that the searchers were fully advised and sure of their location, and by no means working on hearsay or guided by a hastily drawn chart.

It was on the first day of November in 1830, that three horsemen made their appearance at the coach-inn, which at that time was located on the South Country Road midway between the settlements now known as Babylon and Bay Shore. The trio were later described as a small, thin man of undeterminable nationality, a tall and heavy man with a full beard, evidently an Italian, and a man of normal stature who it developed was a deaf-mute. All three were well-dressed, with long coats caped as then the fashion for horsemen, and with appropriate boots.

It was obvious from the condition of their mounts that they had been on the road for many hours, and like the experienced traveler of that day, the first instructions from the thin man were for the care of the horses.

On being greeted by the host, the thin man arranged for lodging for his companions and himself and all three entered the tap-room, where some ten or more travelers

Douglas Tuomey

and local people were enjoying the open fire.

As usual in those days, silence fell upon the room as all turned their heads to observe the newcomers. One of those present was the old physician to whom we have referred previously, and it is to his diary that we are indebted for the minute description of the strangers.

According to this local healer, it soon became plain that the thin man was the important personage. His face was unusually white, in fact according to the good doctor the result of either long imprisonment or fatal disease nearing culmination. His eyes were deeply sunk in his head, his hair white and his actions sharp and cricket-like. At no time during their stay did either of the other two men address or make a gesture to any one else in the inn. The doctor particularly noticed that the thin man was armed; carrying two pistols, not the usual horse-pistols but a set of dueling-pistols.

The heavily bearded man who apparently was unarmed, could well

have been a sea-captain, a merchant or some kind of person of authority, were it not for his furtive manner. He had a peculiar way of constantly turning his head, to stare unblinkingly at any person whose eyes he felt upon him. This, according to the doctor is the sign of one who is uneasy and constantly on guard against an ever-threatening denouement.

The third man, quite without any distinction, and whom the thin man had told the host was a deaf-mute, was the type usually associated with clerical or shop-keeping activities. The strange thing about this man was that although he had been described as a deaf-mute, he half rose from his chair when a mug slid off a tray and crashed to the floor behind him.

After the evening meal, and when most of the guests of the inn had either departed or retired for the night, the thin man held a lengthy conversation with the host. Ignoring any questions as from whence he had come, or upon what business, he asked about the location of a certain church in Babylon,



Wagstaff Lake, West Islip, in the 1890's

the distance across the bay to what we know as Fire Island and from whom a good boat and boatman could be engaged the following morning. Upon receiving satisfactory answers to his inquiries, he followed his companions to bed.

After his departure upstairs, the host and wife and daughter spent several hours discussing their strange guests; coming to the completely correct conclusion that they were after something on the island, and that something could only be buried there. They were mystified at the interest in the church, but this became crystal clear forty-eight hours later. It was a letter, written by the host's daughter several weeks later in which she described the following chain of events, which enabled us to follow down the tale.

At daybreak the strangers were about, and after partaking of a quick breakfast they mounted and rode east for a mile, then turned to the shore of the bay to where a fisherman's shack stood amidst a heavy growth of bull-rushes. Here the thin man held parley with the bayman, counting out several coins as he gave his instructions. As it later developed, the man was engaged for two days and one night if the weather was clear. If not, for as many succeeding days or nights as the project might require. Oddly, the fisherman was not bound to secrecy nor placed under any kind of promise.

Done with the arrangements, the thin man returned to the inn alone, where he purchased some cold meat, bread and spirits, along with a shovel. Leaving the inn, he rode hastily to the small settlement, and from the local blacksmith bought six feet of iron rod of the type in general use for making shapes and bolts for the repair of farm wagons and oxen yokes. Disregarding the smith's attempt at conversation, and paying again in silver coin, the thin man wheeled his horse and returned to the fisherman's hut.

At approximately noon, the strangers were on their way to the island, guided by the bayman who sat at the tiller of his tubby craft and made no attempt to question them. Actually, he was quite content with everything thus far, for certain things had transpired between the time the thin man had

Continued on page 173

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East End's Old Picket Fences

WHILE his simple, common-sense methods might scandalize professional archeologists and antiquarians, Frank B. Eldredge of East Hampton has not only amassed a wealth of historical data concerning the mechanical achievements of Long Island's early settlers but has also become an amateur authority on picket fences.

Ever since he can remember Mr. Eldredge has been interested in tracing his village's three hundred year old history by means of the tools used and the remains of craftsmanship which he has uncovered in attics, old barns and even buried in the ground. This hobby has enabled him to furnish many of the exhibits at the East Hampton Historical Society's museum of local history at Clinton Academy, including a complete set of flax-making implements—swinging knives, hetchels and brakes. Mr. Eldredge, a retired contractor, is also regularly called upon when there is a question of an article's authenticity, and for East Hampton's Tercentenary celebration he built a scale model of the village's first church, complete with thatch roof and stockade-type fence.

Although some of the residents of East Hampton's side streets have discarded the old picket fences and replaced them with split rail or honeysuckle and rose fences, the wide, mile-long Main Street is still lined, as it was in the 18th and 19th centuries, with neat picket fences. Like the salt-box houses which are to be found behind many of them, East Hampton's picket fences have long been famous. So famous, in fact, that requests from southern and western home-owners for descriptions and specifications of the "East Hampton Picket Fence" are regularly received by the Village Clerk.

Actually, as Mr. Eldredge points out, there is no such thing as The East Hampton Picket Fence. While most of the Main Street fence; are painted white and at first glance seem to be much alike, they are far from uniform. Some of these

Eunice Telfer Juckett

fences, including the South End Cemetery enclosure with its three-step stiles and wooden turnstile entrances are original 19th century models. Others are reproductions of 17th and 18th century patterns; some are only two feet high while others are nearly four feet. Some are set on baseboards and have high gateposts with fancy gates swinging from hand-wrought hinges. Most of the fences have a continuous line of pickets but a few are broken at regular intervals by square posts.

Perhaps the most interesting of the picket fence posts are those of the North End Cemetery which are made of granite. These, Mr. Eldredge believes, were brought over to Long Island from Connecticut as ballast by the boats which crossed the Sound carrying leather goods and hides which this section of Long Island once turned out in great abundance.

In spite of their many differences, though, East Hampton's Main Street picket fences do have much in common—their simple lines and excellent proportions. "Those old fences," says Mr. Eldredge, "have a real design. Each

individual picket stands out. When they build fences nowadays they put in great wide pickets and choke 'em to death." Mr. Eldredge then goes on to tell about a picket fence he saw which had pickets 12" wide, coming to three points at the top.

Like his father and grandfather who built a good many of East Hampton's finer homes—and their fences—Mr. Eldredge is a craftsman. A small "shop" at the rear of his property on Davids Lane with its full-rigged whaling ship as a weather vane, was built by Mr. Eldredge after his retirement several years ago, to house the pet tools and other equipment he "just couldn't bear to part with."

A few years ago Mr. Eldredge who is also a camera enthusiast began photographing old picket fences, recording their measurements and pattern. Unfortunately, he says, fences were such a common place thing nobody bothered to keep a record of their erection and setting an accurate date for an early fence is practically impossible. "However," says he, "I've been able to get a pretty good line on those that were built in my father's or grandpappy's time. My daddy could tell just where a picket fence came from and when it was built.



Picket Fence and Stile at South End Cemetery, Overlooking Town Pond, East Hampton.

That may sound funny, but these old picket fences moved around a good deal. They're still moving, in fact. That little low fence that used to be in front of the Dayton place on Main Street was bought some years ago by Francis Newton, the artist, who had it moved up to Fulling Mill Farm at Georgica. When Mrs. Newton died the fence came back to Main Street. It's set up now between the Scott place and the Mulford Farm."

Mr. Eldredge's theory is that the earliest picket fences were refinements of the stick-in-the-ground stockade enclosures of the early settlers. "Until nails were taken out of the individual, hand-made class it was hardly practical," says Mr. E. "to make elaborate fences."

Taking a piece of old lumber

from his woodbin and drawing a rough sketch, he continued, "the earliest picket fences were probably split saplings fastened to cross pieces." Digressing for a moment he inquired, "you know why the old folks used to put their wood-piles next to the street fence don't you?" and then goes on to explain that in the days before coal and oil were used as fuel a man had to spend a good many hours working on his woodpile. If he placed it up near the street fence he had a chance to chat with everyone who went by and not lose too much working time doing so. "Why, I can remember seeing plenty of long sticks piled up against the side fences near the street corners waiting to be cut in house lengths."

Continued on page 175



Old Picket Fence Fronting Ryder-Van Cleef Homestead, Village Road North, Brooklyn, Before 1929.

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Common Terns and Black Skimmers

THERE is need today (May 21st, 1957) for an air cop in the flight lines above Jones Beach. The terns have hatched off their first set of eggs and are busy shuttling back and forth from the nests to the ocean returning with their beaks full of very small fish or crustacea for the youngsters. The food has been caught just below the surface of the ocean, as the terns are not afraid to get their heads wet in diving. (Terns can swim and do so very beautifully but most infrequently.)

The adults fly back and forth almost non-stop. I do not see that they have any rules such as north-bound keep above the southbound, or pass only on the left side, or signal a turn. Each bird does about as he pleases.

For the most part the flight is without noise. The terns seem too occupied for any calling as friend to friend. They can make a shrill cry even though their beaks are crammed with food. They seem to produce the noise when another tern heading in the opposite direction flies too close. They are likely to mutter about the incident long after it occurred.

Later on when the young have grown some and can handle more bulky food, the flight lines will shift from oceanward to bayward. The food right now is small and light, coming from the ocean. The food from the bay will be larger such as killies, spearing and young flounder. After the young terns have taken to the air, sections of small fish, sun-cured, can be found littering the entire nesting area. This indicates the adult terns had been good providers by flying in more food than their fearfully hungry broods could finish off.

The nesting area I watch is located between ocean and bay to the west of Field 7 and at the foot of the Meadowbrook State Parkway. The traffic lanes of the roadway run through the area and many birds are killed annually by colliding with automobile traffic. There are old dunes in the section and, as long as I have known Jones Beach, year after year these same dunes

Julian Denton Smith

have been the nest sites for generations of terns.

I always have trouble seeing the eggs. They look much the color of the sand, spotted and blotched with no two exactly alike. They are laid three to a nest which is nothing more than a small depression in the sand scooped out by the twisting and turning of an adult bird. The eggs are so nearly like the sand that I know I would pass them up if it were not for their shadows clearly setting them forth. Occasionally an adult will bring some small stick or pieces of seaweed as material for the nest. This action is by no means general and seems to be a carry-over from the building of more substantial nests in some earlier period.

The terns resent the presence of anything but birds in the nesting area. They fly up from the nests in great clouds upon my approach. They circle about and the bolder ones dive at my head. They never hit me although the wing tips miss by very small margins. They dodge to the side or upwards when it seems a collision with my head cannot possibly be avoided. They develop expert marksmanship in dive bombing and after each visit to the nests I am obliged to scrub off real well in the ocean.

I do not see how an adult tern knows whose babies are whose. The nests are squeezed tightly together with hardly a foot between and the young birds can tumble from one

nest to the next without half trying. They must get all mixed up. Mistaken identity can surely account for a cause of the arguing, bickering and clamor in the nesting area.

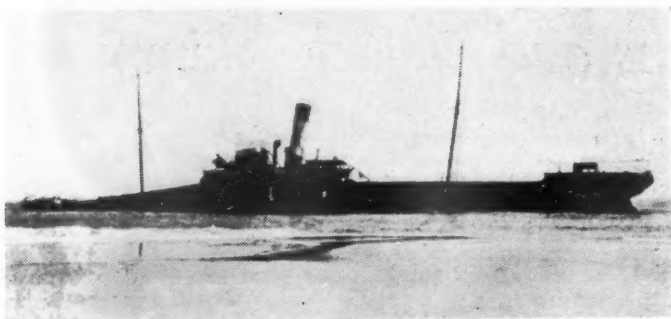
I think all terns are out of the air by nightfall. They seem to have settled down on the nests during the last of the daylight. This is not always true of the other bird that makes its nest with the terns — the black skimmer. The skimmers are on the wing as long as there is light to see by - - and maybe longer. It is said that they are partially nocturnal.

Terns like to nest alone and do not take over kindly to the appearance of black skimmers in the nesting area. The nesting of the skimmers comes later, after the terns' housekeeping is well under way. The terns apparently have the most desirable spots and seem to band together to keep out the skimmers who are not aggressive and appear perfectly happy and contented to settle at the fringe of the tern nests. The terns nearest the larger birds, the skimmers, are unusually nervous and anxious. They seem to expect almost anything to start from their neighbors.

Skimmer eggs resemble tern eggs and the nests are much alike — depressions in the sand. I need shadows for skimmer eggs, too. If a skimmer nest is robbed, the adults get busy and produce a new laying of eggs in a new nest. I do not know that terns will do this although I am inclined to think so.

Continued on Page 176





This is the Roda

The photo used in the July issue was of the Gluckauf.

Continued from Page 162

the harbor. Starting from the sluiceway at the dam and running in front of St. John's Church, its water descended upon the wheel.

Today, with modern machinery, digging a ditch that size would not be much of an undertaking but shoveled out by hand, it must have presented quite a task. The cover photograph shows the mill before it was destroyed by fire in 1921. The flue leading from the canal to the wheel is plainly visible. The sign above the door read:

"Geo. Bennett; Flour, Feed, & Grain."

Mr. Bennett was known as 'Dusty' Bennett, and was the last miller there. The mill had been erected by the Jones family which had other enterprises in Cold Spring Harbor, among them an extensive shipping business. By the time of the fire, Mr. Bennett had gone to the reward of all good millers and so did not see the destruction of the shrine in which he had labored. The foundation and iron gear, still to be seen, are a reminder of an

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—Adv.

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era long passed but not entirely forgotten by some older residents of Huntington Town.

Roy E. Lott,
Huntington Town Historian.

Meteors of 1833

Was interested in the account of the meteoric shower of 1833 in Mr. Bailey's syndicated column. My grandmother who was born in 1812 well remembered the event.
A. B. Roberts, Windham, Conn.

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More Scraps From the Basket

THESE few items that I take from the basket are of interest to me and I hope will be to others.

I've always wondered why the great beam that ran across the old houses to support the upper floor was called the "summer" beam. I've recently found out that the word was originally spelled "sumpter", which the dictionary defines as "to carry weight". It is easy to see how this might be slurred into "summer". I'd always supposed that the sumpter mules, ridden by the old abbotts, were especially fine looking animals, but evidently they were chosen for their weight-carrying ability.

We all know the old nursery rhyme, "Ride a Cock Horse to Banberry Cross", the illustration showing a small boy on a stick horse. Now I find that a cock horse in England in the old days was the extra horse, led behind a coach or carriage, to be hitched in front of the other horses when stuck in a mud-hole or going up an extra steep hill. Vehicles carried extra harness known as the cock horse harness. In other words, the youngster in the rhyme rode the extra horse.

Speaking of Banberry Cross, the original was destroyed in Cromwell's time. A friend, who has been to Banberry recently, tells me that the Cross was rebuilt in the shape of a miniature cathedral. So visitors in England can still visit Banberry Cross, but I am very sure they will not arrive there riding a cock horse.

Miss Mary Fannie Youngs told me the following tale: It seems that her grandfather had a tenant, newly come from Ireland whom he took down to the shore to show him where to dig for soft clams by watching for bubbles. Later he asked his tenant how many he got. "None", was the reply, "They spit and spit at me, but never a nasty critter came to the surface." I must say that, in the original version, at the end of the sentence, the language was much stronger.

In one of the histories I found the following story which, when I have told it, always amused clergy and laity alike:

Kate W. Strong

During the Revolution in one of the east end towns there was a minister who was friendly with the British officers stationed there. He found that in this way he could often be of help to his people. One day he was to go hunting with some British officers but he was delayed. One young officer, lately come from England, became furious at being kept waiting by a "country parson".

When the latter finally arrived, upon being introduced to the officer, he courteously asked what company he commanded. The young officer, thinking to shock this "country parson", replied: "A company of devils straight from hell". Imagine his amazement and fury when the minister, doffing his hat and with a deep bow, returned: "Then I presume I am having the honor to meet Beezlebub, the prince of devils." The young man clapped his hand to his sword, but the matter was smoothed over. However, I think he must have acquired a higher idea for this "country parson".

I have recently learned of an old deed, hidden away in the safety deposit box of the Setauket Pres-

byterian Church. It seems that when the present church was being built in 1811, the Floyds suddenly claimed the land. As this church was built on the site of the 1714 church, there was no question as to ownership. Although the land did not belong to the Floyds, the trustees evidently thought it wiser to compromise, and paid \$40 to clear the title.

Again, when the Strongs' Neck Bridge was building, the town gave permission for the landing on the village end. When the Floyds claimed the property there was a lawsuit which lasted for years, and eventually the Floyds won. Later, because of a deed from the Strongs of a small piece of land that straightened the line of their property, the Floyds gave the landing to the town, which makes a small bathing beach.

In another legal battle the Floyds were not so fortunate. They claimed the small burying-ground, known as the 'triangle piece', which the town had given to the church. But in that lawsuit the church won.

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MUSICAL FOXHOUNDS

Among the enthusiastic foxhunters who followed the sport in Long Island's then unspoiled woodlands during the latter half of the 19th century was a quartet of Nimrods who, as far as foxhunting was concerned, were known as The Big Four. They were Captain Robert L. Petty, a retired sea captain who became sheriff of Suffolk County; his brother Daniel, an excellent ship's carpenter and house builder who like Captain Bob was a resident of Bellport; Judge Willard Bartlett, beloved citizen of Middle Island whose vast estate stood near Artist's Lake, and Colonel Appleton, who besides his extensive land holdings on Long Island owned a large hunting preserve named Belvedere in Bryan County, Georgia, for shooting ducks, quail, doves, wild turkeys and deer.

Judge Bartlett did a lot of building on his Middle Island property and gave employment to many local men in the construction of unusual fences and arbors which the Judge designed; paddocks, various buildings and brick walls located at random throughout the property, some of which still stand. It is told that one time when a shipment of lumber failed to arrive, instead of depriving his carpenters of a day's work he set them to picking huckleberries with orders to take home what they wanted, but to give the surplus to his hogs as there was nothing quite like huckleberry-flavored pork.

Sometimes the Big Four entertained prominent guests from New York, Connecticut and other off-island points, but more often they hunted in one exclusive foursome. They had Judge Henry A. Gildersleeve of New York as a guest on a late December day in 1875, and had assembled in Knockomock Woods on the Tangier Smith estate in Mastic at the east end of Great South Bay. Captain Bob had brought his famous pure-bred hounds, imported from the British Isles, probably the finest on Long Island.

Here they were "on stand" awaiting the appearance of a red fox or his more highly prized cousin, the grey fox. The hounds had been released down on Smith's Point near the bay where the sly Reynards used to gather at daybreak in search of wild ducks crippled by gunners. This meadow

Continued on next page

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point lying well to the south of Knockomock Woods gave the hounds a good chance to pick up fox scent as the game returned over the broad meadow to the cover of the woods.

This was one of those crisp mornings when the bay of a hound pack is especially musical. Three of the Big Four, standing together, guns in hand, before taking their stands to await the drive, enjoyed the bell-like tones of the highly bred pack in full cry. But Captain Bob Petty, notwithstanding his other fine qualities, detested music of any kind or description. Not so with Judge Bartlett who turned to Colonel Appleton and remarked that this was certainly heavenly music. The Colonel agreed that it was indeed and passed a similar remark on to Judge Gildersleeve.

As Captain Bob made no comment, Judge Bartlett turned to him and exclaimed, "Captain Bob, that really is heavenly music, isn't it?" The Captain listened intently, turning his head from side to side to bring his best ear into play. Then he spoke as follows: "Judge, those damned hounds are making so damned much noise that damned if I can hear any music."

Capt. Wilbur A. Corwin,
Bellport.

Duke's County

In mentioning recently the twelve original counties of New York (1683) we stated that Duke's County "eventually disappeared entirely." We should have added "from New York." Mr. Harrison L. Jewett of Shoreham writes that Duke's "did not 'disappear', it only moved out of New York. When the twelve counties were set up, New York claimed jurisdiction over the island of Martha's Vineyard and some smaller surrounding islands, and these made up Duke's County. Later, the facts of geography were recognized, and the county was transferred to Massachusetts but retained its name." However, "when Massachusetts named her counties, Duke's County was named, by a slip of the legislative pen, the 'County of Dukes County'; and it is still so designated officially..."

Mr. Hall and I enjoy the Forum each month and I find the historical material very useful in my library work. Martha K. Hall, Librarian, Huntington Historical Society.

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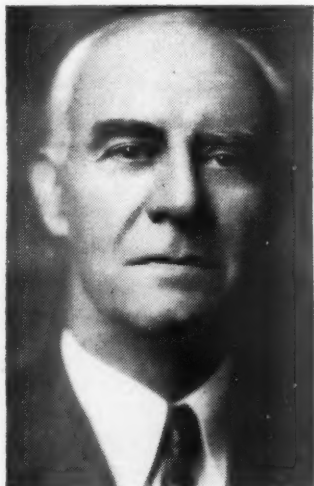
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Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood

The Senior Contributing Editor of the Long Island Forum died at his home in Clearwater, Florida, on July 30, in his 84th year. Dr. Wood joined the Forum upon retirement as research counsel to the New York State Court of Appeals, with which body he had been associated for more than forty years.

Born at Setauket, the son of John Oakley Wood and Carrie Smith Wood, both of old Long Is-



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land families, Clarence Ashton Wood was left an orphan at the age of four years. Bound out to a Southold farmer, he became a school teacher, later a journalist, and still later a counselor at law.

During his association with the Forum for more than fifteen years, Dr. Wood made many lasting contributions to the published history of Southold town, Suffolk County and the island as a whole.

Dr. Wood will be remembered for many years to come for his leading part in preserving for future generations the story of Long Island's past. Editors.

The L. I. Naturalist

Number 6 of The Long Island Naturalist, published annually by The Baldwin Bird Club and edited by Edwin Way Teale, is out, containing contributions by George H. Peters, John J. Elliott, Roy Latham, Nellie D. Teale and Martha Meinke, all authoritative writers.

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Continued from page 164

ended his conversation with the host at the inn and the time the strangers arrived at the fisherman's shack.

The host had been very active during the night. First he had sent a hostler to the fisherman, to tell him to expect the strangers in the morning, and to tell what he thought they were about. Next, he had passed the word of the suspected treasure hunt to friends, and even as the fisherman's boat was leaving the shore, two other boats were in readiness but hidden in the rushes a mile or so below the shack. The fisherman had left his silver hire behind him, the three horses were tethered behind his hut, and a couple of friends would see to it that the strangers never threw leg over them again, if the fisherman failed to return with the party.

Landing was made in an hour or so, the boat pulled up and preparations made for the overnight stay. As darkness closed in and the sky above became bright with

stars, the thin man and one companion walked to the ocean side of the island, and standing atop one of the dunes, he scanned the skies for a certain constellation well down on the horizon. Satisfied, he drove down a stick, and leisurely returned to the camp. Unknown to him, no less than four pairs of eyes were spying upon him.

At full daylight the next morning, the thin man walked to the bay side of the island, and pulling out the small telescope he had with him, he spotted the spire of the church about which he had inquired. Meanwhile, his bearded companion had returned to where the stick had been driven the night before, and turning, faced toward the thin man, who moved further and further in a westerly direction, until the church spire and the stick on the dunes were in alignment. Now with a wave of the arms, both men walked toward each other, thrusting down sticks every fifty feet until a straight line was established.

At this point they retraced their steps to the camp, took up the spade and iron rod and proceeded to the ocean end of the line of sticks. The fisherman was invited to accompany them, which he did, and later he told his audience that at no time did he see any of the three men consult a map, chart or writing of any description.

Upon reaching the ocean end of their marker, the thin man made a most careful survey of the shore line, evidently trying to establish a more or less definite high-water line, and having made a decision he paced off a score or so of steps. At this point, the bearded man who was carrying the iron rod proceeded to thrust it deep into the soft sand, once along the very center of the marker and again to both sides a foot or two away. At no more than the fourth or fifth thrust, he looked at his companions and pointed to the ground. Grasping the shovel, the deaf-mute made rapid progress in the sand, and after reaching a depth of about three feet he mo-

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tioned to the thin man, who jumped into the hole and after a moment of tugging, threw out a double bag of soft leather.

Four bags were dug out in all. Each was a double, shapeless affair, held loosely together with a strap and having the seams rudely stitched with cordage. There was no attempt to look for more, and obviously the strangers knew that four was the total to be found.

The thin man and the deaf-mute each shouldered one of the finds, while the bearded man took two. His knees sagged under their weight and it must have been enormous, for he was powerful.

At this point the thin man discovered that they were being watched, and the click of the dueling pistols broke the silence; but the men who had followed the strangers to the island kept their distance, and not a word was spoken between the groups.

Turning toward the beached boat they made as rapid progress as possible, but halfway there the fisherman was asked to relieve the thin man, who was shaking like a leaf. On reaching the boat they shoved off at once, and arrived at the shack before darkness fell. Here the strangers threw the bags over the horses' shoulders and mounted. The thin man reined in for a moment, and shouting something unintelligible to the fisherman, he flung him a handful of silver, whereupon they

dug in the spurs and galloped off as though all the demons of hell were in pursuit. They were never seen again.

As the strangers left, the fisherman's friends appeared from their hiding places and helped him gather the silver, while questions flew about like chaff.

That night, at the inn, there was great speculation. So many had seen the discovery, to say nothing of the preparations, that all knew they had been within a few feet of a fabulous fortune. For weeks and even months, parties prodded and dug about the excavation made by the deaf-mute, but without success.

The aged physician had what was probably the most sensible solution to the affair, and that was, that the thin man had been a prisoner where a freebooter was likewise confined, and probably got from him the location of the treasure. His startling conclusion was that the bearded man and the "deaf-mute" were prison officials. I have found that he was correct.

Lafayette Carriage at Stony Brook

The carriage used in 1825 by Lafayette in journeying from Claremont, N. H., to Windsor, Vt., during his American visit as guest of honor of the U. S., is now on exhibition at the Carriage House of the Suffolk Museum, at Stony Brook.

The French Marquise, who had served on Washington's staff during the American Revolution, was brought to America in 1825 on the former Long Island whaleship Cadmus which 25 years later carried East Coast goldseekers to California where it ended its days as a derelict in the mud of San Francisco Bay.

L. I. Descendant

I am a descendant of several Long Island families including Horton, Topping, Warner, Swazey (Swezey), White, Helme and Hallock. Your Forum has made Long Island live for me with its fine articles and letters. Would appreciate hearing from descendants of above families. Mrs. A. O. Westover, 4455 Cleveland, San Diego 16, Cal.

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Continued from page 166

Going back to the subject of nails he continued: "When nails became more plentiful people began to go in for fancier fences. I've heard my grandpappy say they used to have set patterns and charge so much a lineal foot for putting up a fence, but there were all kinds of variations too. Take the gateposts he designed for what's now the Dean place on Ocean Avenue. Those posts used to have a wooden urn at the top with an accanthus bud. The urns disappeared a good many years ago and nobody knows what happened to them.

The simplest picket, according to Mr. E. is the straight, sharply pointed variety. Variations of this include the blunt, or sawed off point, the pyramid tipped, and the Gothic or curved. A few pickets even have patterned points and look like geometric Christmas trees. Some pickets or palings are flat, some round and others square.

The fence makeup itself, is likewise varied, the variations being caused by the presence, or absence of baseboards, the type of rails, distance between rails and perhaps the addition of an astragal, or rounded piece to cover the nailheads. Most fences have the pickets even spaced,

but in some, for instance the one in front of The Hedges, and the newer one at Guild Hall, different types of pickets are used. At the Dean place the square pickets are set in the baseboard at right angles, to give a diamond effect.

Differences in size and shape of palings, baseboards, railings and posts all have to be taken into account in working on picket fences. "And that's why," says Mr. Eldredge as he walks to the double door of his shop with his visitor, "you could study these picket fences from now until Doomsday and not know all there is to know about them." As the visitor says "Good-bye" to the picket-fence authority and leaves the shop he is struck by a startling incongruity — the Eldredge property is neatly enclosed with privet hedge and a weathered post and rail fence.

Order of Clamdiggers

I note with interest a suggestion in the August Forum relative to the formation of a society known

as the Order of Clamdiggers to which only native Long Islanders are eligible for membership.

The idea of an insignia (clam-shell design) is most appropriate. I would be most happy to meet with you and any other persons interested, at an appropriate time, to take steps in the formation of this organization. * * * It would seem to me that there should be an annual banquet of the association at an appropriate place where clams can be eaten according to the taste of the members. C. Bruce Pearsall, Counselor at Law, Amityville.

Note: The Forum would like to hear from other readers interested. Also, who will contribute a clamshell design?

Railroad History

While reading in the June issue of the Forum the article "Little Known RR Stations" the thought entered my head, how nice if someone would write a history of railroading on L. I.

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Continued from page 167

Skimmers are bigger birds than terns and one cannot be mistaken for the other. Skimmers have long red bills which are black tipped. The upper and lower mandibles are compressed laterally, like knife blades, and do not meet as with ducks. The lower bill of the skimmer projects far out beyond the upper. The books say the upper bill can be raised slightly. I do not know.

The longer lower mandible is especially useful in catching small fish. The birds skim along the surface of shallow water letting the lower mandible slip into the water to snare small fry. This skimming along the water seems an effortless part of flight. It is done with extreme grace and unassuming style. I never tire watching this action.

There is a small freshwater pond in the dunes farther to the west of the nesting area. It is barely twelve feet in length. The skimmers will swoop down at exactly the right angle, dip in the lower bill, snatch a drink, and be up and away before they have reached the end of the little puddle. It is all done in less time than it takes to tell. It is really a beautiful and fascinating bit of flying technique.

As black skimmers wheel and turn in flight they frequently show the deep black color of their backs and wings. Their blackness must clearly mark them from above. I never see any bird chase the skimmers so, perhaps, they can permit this disregard of camouflage without assuming too great a risk.

The birds are migratory, the terns wintering south from Georgia and

the black skimmers no farther north than Cape Hatteras. They usually arrive at Jones Beach very close to the first day of May. The skimmers with less distance to travel do not show up until about a week after the terns. I never see terns or skimmers inland like gulls which appear from time to time on our fields.

A common name, "Sea Swallow," is very fittingly applied to both the common tern and the black skimmer. The flight of each resembles the swallow in grace and ease as well as in swift dashing and wild cavorting. I have little use for these two seaside birds as homemakers, but I do delight in witnessing the art of flight as they demonstrate it.

Search for the Savannah

You will be interested to know that we have at long last unearthed through the help of the Navy's Hydrographic Office a latitude and longitude for the wreck of the Savannah. To my knowledge this location has never before been generally known. Thought you would be interested in knowing.

We will keep you posted as to further developments in our project to find the Savannah and to arouse public interest in this famous old ship so that the atom ship will be named in her honor. Frank O. Braynard, Director, Bureau of Information, American Merchant Marine Institute, Inc.

Note: The Savannah, first sailing-steam ship to cross Atlantic, was wrecked somewhere along the south side of Long Island November 5, 1821. The exact location has never been known. All eleven men aboard were lost. Her master was Captain John Coles of Glen Cove. Editor.

Brooklyn Clamdiggers

Why confine the Order of Clamdiggers to native Long Islanders? We Brooklynites would like to qualify. A. R. A., Flatlands.

Note: When has Brooklyn ceased to be part and parcel of L. I.?

"Len" Hall Likes It

*** am looking forward to receiving the Long Island Forum. I happened to read it while sitting in Henry Eisemann's library and found it very fascinating. Leonard W. Hall, Oyster Bay.

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Photo by Prudence T. Warner

SURF FISHERMEN AT MONTAUK

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Young Designers Create for Fall

With fall in the air, it's "Off to the Races!" With Belmont Park in mind, two students at Traphagen School of Fashion, New York, designed and made the costumes seen here. They were the prize winners in the Fashion Clinic Show staged at the school, when students modeled clothes of their own selection, chosen for a given occasion with no assistance from their teachers . . . the acid test of putting into practice what they had learned. Frances Dettan, left, wears a sheath of thin black wool topped by an open-neck coat of black and white. Eileen Byre, right, models her casual coat of rust and beige hand-loomed Scotch tweed.

To show interested young people and their parents just what the preparation is, for the many branches of the \$20-billion-a-year business of fashion, an exhibit is currently open at the school. Career displays in design, illustra-



tion, clothing construction, pattern-making, interior decor and merchandise display will be on view at Traphagen, 1680 Broadway (52nd St.), New York, all during September, prior to the opening of the fall term October 1st. Visitors are welcome and will find their questions will be answered without obligation.

Robert R. Coles' article on L. I.'s Indian names was most informative. S. E. Lessing, Port Washington.



The Late Jesse Merritt

Jesse Merritt, Historian

The passing of Jesse Merritt, Nassau County Historian, was a great loss to that county and to the cause of recording and preserving its history. For many years he had devoted much of his time not simply to research, but to placing his findings before the public in such a manner as to create greater general interest in the subject.

These few words are contributed by a friend on behalf of those who knew and appreciated his lasting contributions.

Vanderwort Mansion, Brooklyn

I have never come across anything about the old Vanderwort family or their mansion in the Forum. The mansion still stands at Flushing Avenue and Vanderwort Place, Brooklyn, with its big bay window still overhanging the sidewalk. I was born in this 200-year old home 73 years ago when it was a beautiful place with large porch, barn and carriage house amid lots of trees. The section was then known as Pickleville.

After the Vanderworts, the mansion became a three-apartment house, the three families being Kof, May and Wellman. Joseph Kof was a veterinary and boarded and pastured horses for Brooklyn and New York cities. I recall two white marble slabs at the foot of the porch steps on which we used to play jacks. When they moved the mansion to make room for Flushing Avenue and turned over these slabs they were found to be gravestones, face down, bearing inscriptions for two Vanderwort children. When the house was moved it was raised another story and two stores were put on the ground floor.

Our family moved to the Wyck-off Heights section of Ridgewood. As there were no schools in Ridgewood then, I walked three miles to a school at Star Street and

Continued on back cover

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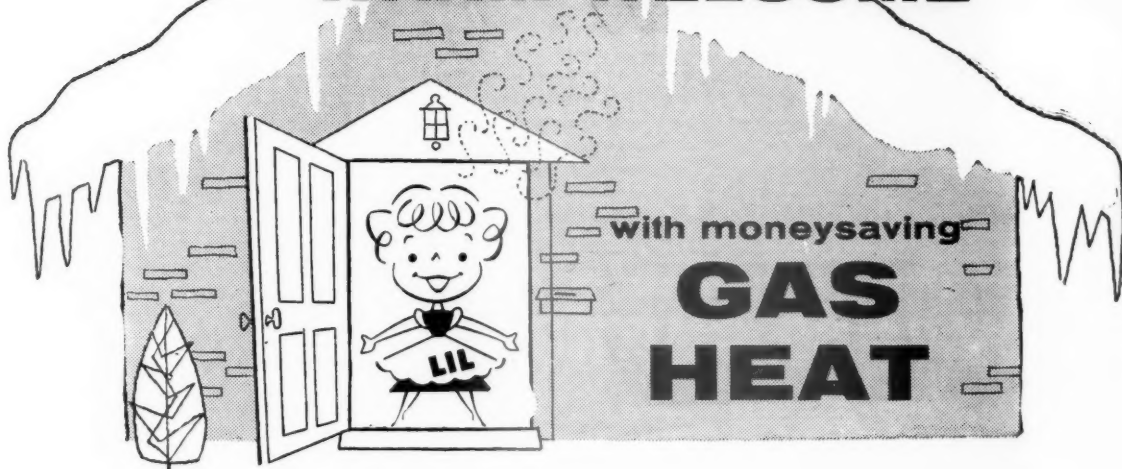
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Central Avenue, Brooklyn. The
section up the hill above the Wyck-
off farms, about where Seneca and
DeKalb Avenues are, was then
known as Eagle Nest. Otto E.
May, Cutchogue.

It was just 100 years ago that
the village of South Haven was
officially so named by the Brook-
haven Town Board. Mrs. Cora P.
Bacon, Hempstead.

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